

Partial List of Watermaster Season Duties

- Read and comprehend the Superior Court Decrees or recorded agreements that define water rights within the Watermaster Service Area. These documents normally define quantity and priority of water rights, point of diversion, and location, purpose, and season of use.
- Apply the language of the Decrees, which are up to 107 years old. The decrees are the law regardless of present-day land ownership, land use, and irrigation practices.
- Maintain and update the Field Schedule for each stream in the Watermaster Service Area(s) for which the Watermaster is responsible. The Field Schedule describes water rights, current owners, priorities, total volumes, points of diversion and seasons of use so the Watermaster can adjust diversions to deliver water accurately, according to the terms of the Decree(s).
- Contact water right holders prior to the beginning of or early in the season, concerning precipitation, likely runoff and consequences to diversions, problems with diversions and diversion structures, disputes between water users, etc.
- Resolve water right disagreements between water users. This requires an understanding of Decrees and any amendments or legal agreements; the Decree or engineering study maps created to assist in creation of the Decree(s); present day diversion operations; current ownership boundaries; and use of water by water right holders.
- Measure flows in streams and diversions to ensure legal diversion of water according to water rights and priorities.
- Remind each and every water user of their legal requirement to maintain working measurement devices and locking head gates, and dams if applicable. California Water Code Section 4100: "The owner of every conduit subject to regulation by a watermaster shall construct and maintain to the satisfaction of the department a substantial and serviceable diversion dam or works in the channel of the stream from which the water is diverted." Section 4101: "The owner of a conduit shall construct and maintain to the satisfaction of the department a substantial and serviceable headgate in the conduit through which the water is diverted at or near the diversion dam or works." Section 4102: "The headgate shall be of such construction that it can be locked and kept closed by the watermaster. Section 4103: "The owner of a conduit shall construct and maintain such water flow measuring devices at such points along the conduit as may be required and approved by the department for the purpose of assisting the watermaster in determining the amounts of water which are being diverted and applied to

beneficial use.” Section 4104: “If the owner of any conduit refuses or neglects to construct and maintain the diversion dam or works, the headgate, or the measuring devices provided for in this article after 30 days' notice by the department so to do, the watermaster may close the conduit, and it shall not be opened or any water diverted from the source of supply until the requirements of the department as to the diversion dam or works, the headgate, or the measuring devices have been complied with.”

- Plan, design, and help water users to install head gates, diversion structures, measurement devices, and stream gages as necessary to ensure accurate diversion of decreed water rights.
- Maintain a detailed, daily log book of all measured flows, diversion adjustments, significant conversations and phone calls, and problems.
- Respond to phone calls from water right holders, various government agencies, and coworkers.
- Work with Endangered Species Act issues when they pertain to water flow and diversions.
- Work closely with other local, state and federal agencies concerning flows and water rights.

Partial List of Wintertime Watermaster Duties

- Update original decree maps, which are now outdated because of changes in ownership, parcel splits, land use changes, etc.
- Create and maintain an Operation Manual for each Watermaster Service Area. These manuals include photographs of all dams, diversions, ditches and appurtenant structures. The manuals benefit water users by providing information for annual reports, reducing training for new employees, increasing efficiency in the field, and so on.
- Update Field Schedules for each stream in each Service Area.
- Query owner maps and information in ParcelQuest, to update billing and field schedules throughout the Winter.
- Complete watermaster statement (budget) by June 15 per California Water Code Section 4225: "The department shall, prior to June 15th of each year, prepare a statement for each service area. The statement shall contain a budget showing the amount of money estimated to be necessary to pay the costs of administration of the service area and the distribution of water therein for the ensuing fiscal year."
- Prepare annual Watermaster reports, which are required by the California Water Code.
- Resolve ongoing Watermaster issues, including disagreements between water right holders, coordination with other agencies, queries by new landowners, etc.
- Provide Wintertime watermastering as necessary.
- Plan, design, and help water users to install head gates, diversion structures, measurement devices, and stream gages as necessary to ensure accurate diversion of decreed water rights.
- Prepare and transmit Watermaster Billing to over 1,600 water right holders.
- Prepare and maintain required record books and detailed maps of problem areas.
- Vacations – DWR has the watermasters take as little vacation as possible during the field season. In most cases watermasters take six to eight weeks off during the non-field season (i.e. earned compensating time off, vacation, annual leave, etc.)